

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-11

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TO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PRIORITY
INFO AMEMBASSY KABUL
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY COLOMBO
AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU
AMEMBASSY DACCA

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 155072

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PGOV, AF, PK, IN

SUBJECT: NEA ASSISTANT SECRETARY SAUNDERS' MEETING WITH
PAK AMBASSADOR, JUNE 16

SUMMARY: DURING 30 MINUTE MEETING SAUNDERS DESCRIBED HIS
TALK WITH AFGHAN FOREIGN MINISTER IN NEW YORK STATING
THAT PURPOSE OF HIS CALL WAS TO DEMONSTRATE TO NEW AFGHAN
LEADERS THAT U.S. IS PREPARED TO HAVE RELATIONS WITH THEM.
PAK AMBASSADOR SAID AFGHANS ARE SPEAKING OUT OF BOTH SIDES
OF THEIR MOUTH AND HIS GOVERNMENT IS GRAVELY WORRIED BY
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AFGHAN SITUATION AND HAS OFFERED TO TALK WITH NEW GOVERN-
MENT ABOUT AFGHAN-PAK RELATIONS BUT KABUL HAD RESPONDED
EVASIVELY.

SAUNDERS ALSO PROVIDED PAK AMBASSADOR WITH A VERY GENERAL
READOUT ON THE DESAI VISIT. END SUMMARY.

1. AMBASSADOR YAQUB-KHAN ACCOMPANIED BY MINISTER-COUNSELOR HAYAT MEHDI CALLED ON ASSISTANT SECRETARY SAUNDERS JUNE 16. PETER LANDE (NEA), JANE COON (NEA/PAB) AND MICHAEL HORNBLOW (NEA/PAB) ALSO PARTICIPATED IN HALF HOUR MEETING.

2. SAUNDERS DESCRIBED HIS MEETING WITH AFGHAN FOREIGN

MINISTER HAFIZULLAH AMIN IN NEW YORK ON JUNE 5. SAUNDERS SAID THAT MAIN PURPOSE OF HIS CALL ON AMIN WAS TO DEMONSTRATE TO LEADERS OF NEW AFGHAN GOVERNMENT THAT U.S. IS PREPARED TO HAVE RELATIONS WITH THEM AND TO EXPLAIN TO AMIN THAT ALTHOUGH U.S. ACCEPTS A PLURALISTIC WORLD THERE ARE CERTAIN LIMITATIONS, SUCH AS HUMAN RIGHTS LEGISLATION AND LEGISLATION PROHIBITING U.S. ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO COMMUNIST COUNTRIES WHICH AFFECT THE CONDUCT OF OUR FOREIGN POLICY. SAUNDERS SAID THAT ALTHOUGH AMIN SEEMED TO BE A MAN COMMITTED TO A REVOLUTION, HE DID NOT COME ACROSS PERSONALLY AS AN EXTREME REVOLUTIONARY BUT WAS INSTEAD A MODERATE, SOFT-SPOKEN PERSON.

3. YAQUB-KHAN SAID THAT SINCE THE COUP THE AFGHANS HAVE BEEN TALKING OUT OF BOTH SIDES OF THEIR MOUTH. IN PRIVATE THEY SAY ONE THING BUT THEIR PUBLIC PRONOUNCEMENTS ARE REDOLENT OF THE PAST PAINFUL RELATIONS BETWEEN PAKISTAN AND AFGHANISTAN. AMIN'S SPEECH IN THE UN ABOUT THE CONFIDENTIAL

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"RIGHTS" OF THE PUSHTUNS WERE THE OPENING BARS OF A MELODY WHICH WAS ALL TOO FAMILIAR TO THE GOP. YAQUB KHAN SAID THAT THE PAKS HAD BEEN RESTRAINED IN RESPONDING TO AMIN'S PUBLIC PRONOUNCEMENTS AND HAD RECEIVED PRESS CRITICISM IN PAKISTAN FOR THIS RESTRAINT.

4. YAQUB-KHAN SAID THAT THE INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO THE GOP ABOUT AFGHANISTAN BELIES AFGHAN STATEMENTS ABOUT THEIR INDEPENDENCE FROM THE USSR. HE SAID THE PAKS ARE WATCHING THE AFGHAN SITUATION CAREFULLY BUT IT IS FAIR TO SAY THAT EVENTS THUS FAR HAVE GIVEN "SUBSTANCE TO OUR GRAVEST APPREHENSIONS." YAQUB-KHAN SAID HE WAS NOT SURE WHAT POLICY HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD FORMULATE IN VIEW OF THIS "POSSIBLE LATENT THREAT." THE GOP HAD APPROACHED THE AFGHANS TO SUGGEST A CONTINUATION OF THE DISCUSSIONS WHICH HAD REACHED A FRUITFUL STAGE WITH DAOUD. HOWEVER IN RESPONSE KABUL HAS BEEN DRAGGING ITS FEET CLAIMING THAT THEY HAVE TO STUDY THE DOSSIER OF THE DAOUD TALKS. NEVERTHELESS THE GOP HAS NOT GIVEN UP HOPE THAT SUCH A MEETING COULD BE POSSIBLE. YAQUB-KHAN SAID THE GOP IS INTERESTED IN THE CONCERNS OF THE AFGHANS BUT CANNOT REMAIN INDIFFERENT DUE TO THE "CONTIGUENCY" OF THE SOVIETS. THE

GOP OF COURSE WAS IN CLOSE TOUCH WITH THE IRANIANS ABOUT THE AFGHAN SITUATION.

5. SAUNDERS THEN PROVIDED A VERY GENERAL READOUT ON THE DESAI VISIT DISCUSSIONS. HE MENTIONED THAT THE ATMOSPHERE HAD BEEN CORDIAL, PARTICULARLY BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT AND DESAI. NUCLEAR ISSUES HAD BEEN DISCUSSED, MOSTLY AT THE SENIOR STAFF LEVEL, BUT NONE OF THESE DISCUSSIONS HAD BEEN CONCLUSIVE. THE PRESIDENT HAD BRIEFED DESAI ON SUCH

DISARMAMENT ISSUES AS SALT AND THE CTB BUT PERHAPS THE MOST INTERESTING AND SUBSTANTIVE TALKS HAD BEEN THOSE DEALING WITH THE SOUTH ASIAN REGION. SAUNDERS SAID THAT IN THESE DISCUSSIONS WE HAD TRIED TO MAKE CLEAR THAT THE CONFIDENTIAL

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PAKS WERE DEEPLY CONCERNED BY AFGHAN DEVELOPMENTS AND HAD ENCOURAGED THE INDIANS TO TAKE ACTIONS TO DIMINISH PAK CONCERNS.

6. SAUNDERS SAID THAT IN GENERAL THE INDIAN ANALYSIS OF THE AFGHAN SITUATION PARALLELED OURS BUT THE INDIANS GAVE MORE EMPHASIS TO THE NATIONALISTIC ELEMENTS IN THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT OF AFGHANISTAN AND DOWNPLAYED THE DEGREE OF SOVIET INFLUENCE. BOTH THE INDIANS AND THE U.S. AGREED THAT IT WAS IMPORTANT FOR BOTH COUNTRIES TO CONTINUE THEIR ACTIVITIES IN AFGHANISTAN IN ORDER TO PROVIDE AN ALTERNATIVE TO COMPLETE DEPENDENCE ON THE USSR.

7. SAUNDERS SAID THAT WE HAD ALSO TOLD THE INDIANS THAT THE U.S. WAS DOING ITS BEST TO MAINTAIN AND ENLIVEN U.S.-PAK RELATIONS AND THAT WE RECOGNIZE PAK CONCERNS ARE SERIOUS AND IMPORTANT FOR THE REGION AND THAT WE WISH TO SHOW AN UNDERSTANDING OF THESE CONCERNS.

8. LANDE ADDED THAT THE INDIAN REPRESENTATIVES HAD SAID IT WAS IN INDIA'S INTEREST TO HAVE A STRONG, UNITED PAKISTAN AND THE INDIANS REALIZED THAT SINCE THEY WERE THE STRONGER POWER, THEY SHOULD MAKE MORE OF THE CONCESSIONS. THE INDIANS SHARED PAK CONCERNS ABOUT THE REGION AND ABOUT AFGHANISTAN BUT THEY PERCEIVED IT AS MORE OF A POLITICAL PROBLEM RATHER THAN A MILITARY PROBLEM. LANDE ALSO SAID THE INDIANS WERE CONCERNED THAT THE PROCESS OF NORMALIZATION BETWEEN INDIA AND PAKISTAN HAD GROUND TO A HALT. THE INDIANS WERE PREPARED TO MAKE OVERTURES TO THE PAKS BUT THEY WERE AFRAID THAT AT THIS HISTORICAL STAGE SUCH OVERTURES MIGHT BE MISUNDERSTOOD BY THE PAKISTANIS.

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9. YAQUB-KHAN SAID THAT IT WAS TRUE NORMALIZATION HAS NOT FLOURISHED BUT THE ORIGINAL SIMLA AGENDA FOR DISCUSSIONS HAD BEEN COMPLETED EXCEPT FOR THE ONE ISSUE. FURTHER STEPS WOULD BE DIFFICULT PARTLY BECAUSE OF PAK PUBLIC OPINION UNLESS THERE COULD BE SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSIONS ABOUT KASHMIR.

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